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ABSTRACT

A 12-week practicum was developed to improve school climate by using conflict resolution in grades K-6. Staff and students completed a poll designed to assess their concerns about the daily functioning of the school. The school's climate was discussed in light of how the student body reacted to the school setting, with emphasis on areas where supervision was not too obvious. Following the survey results, the focus shifts to a concentration on the areas of recess, playground, assemblies, and hallways. Rules in each of these areas received a new direction. Classes received instruction in how these areas would be addressed and what was expected of students. Careful supervision and analysis of the data allowed the researcher to adjust methodology and address problems as they arose. By the end of the 12 weeks, clear guidelines for acceptable behavior in the cafeteria, recess, hallway, and auditorium had been established. The students knew their limits and willingly accepted the imposed restrictions because they had been part of the rule-making process. (Fourteen appendices include the questionnaire for conflict resolution and the various checklists used. Contains 40 references.) (AA)

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Improving School Climate by Using Conflict Resolution in Grades K-6

by

Bernadette L. McNulty

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A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Nova Southeastern University

1994

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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July 11, 1994
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This practicum report was submitted by Bernadette L. McNulty under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

12-14-94
Date of Final Approval of Report

Georgianna Lowen
Georgianna Lowen, Ed.D., Advisor

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ABSTRACT

Improved School Climate by Using Conflict Resolution in Grades K-6. McNulty, Bernadette L., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies.

This practicum emphasized the need that children require a safe and calm environment in which to grow and mature both academically and socially. The climate was discussed in the light of how the student body reacted to the school setting. Stress was put on areas where supervision was not too obvious. Communication and organization with the faculty was absolutely essential to the successful outcome of this project.

A poll was given to the stakeholders, to determine their concerns in the daily functioning of the school. After the results of the survey were analyzed, it was decided to concentrate on the areas of recess, playground, assemblies, and hallways. Rules in each of these areas received a new direction. Classes received instruction in how these areas would be addressed and what was expected of them. Careful supervision and analysis of the data allowed the writer to adjust methodology and address problems as they arose.

At the conculsion of this practicum clear guidelines for acceptable behavior in the cafeteria, recess, hallways and auditorium were established. The students knew their parameters and willingly accepted the imposed restrictions because they were part of the process. The joint working of administrators, faculty, and students was reflected in a better school climate.

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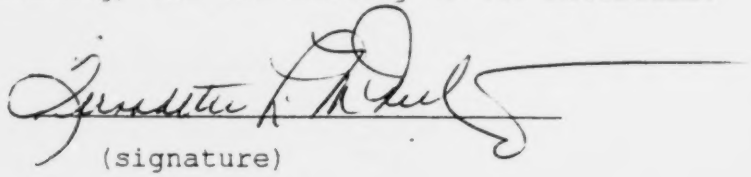
August 21, 1994 

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Community

The community in which this writer is employed is located 30 miles from a major industrial and financial center in the United States. Zoning is especially stringent; all houses must be built on at least two acres of land. Prices of houses, although readjusted in the last two years, are among the highest in the nation. The community consists of many professional people as well as entrepreneurs who have been successful in their business endeavors. Most community members are affluent, but the recent downward trend in the economy has taken its toll on the area. Families forced to move because of a change in their economic status are not uncommon. Property taxes, including school taxes, are also extremely high. The average home owner pays about $10,250 per year. Across the community there is a general rallying to work together to keep the tax structure within reason.

The physical plant in which this writer is employed is in disrepair and needs a large investment to bring it up to state standards. Part of the building is wood frame, which is allowed only because the school is covered by a "grandfather" clause. Monies that were appropriated for

repairs on the building disappeared when the state government withdrew a percentage of their planned funding. The state allocation of money was cut by $7,000,000 in 1991. This impacted heavily on the district because taxes could not be raised immediately to cover this discrepancy. Voters in the district will not pass a budget that shows a large increase in the school tax. Most of the community members, 57%, do not have children presently in the schools and are hard-pressed to understand the need to dramatically increase their taxes.

Along with being outwardly neglected, the building is in need of a thorough cleaning. Two years ago the custodial staff, then inadequate, was cut another 30%. It is physically impossible for one full-time and three part-time custodians to do the proper maintenance within the building. Supervision of the custodial staff is almost nonexistent. All the nighttime personnel are part-time and there is no one in charge of the work they are supposed to accomplish. No accountability is forthcoming because supervision is lacking. As a result, the physical plant is in dire need of immediate attention and many areas do not meet the state safety standards.

The total school community is small in population, but covers a very large territorial area. Across the district much of the land is set aside for tax-free institutions. Approximately 40% of the area included in the school district

is non-taxable. This is of constant concern to the district, for many of these institutions are well-endowed and are constantly buying up new tracks of land as they become available. The district provides tax-free education to the children of the employees of these non-profit organizations. This factor is well known to the taxpayers of the district and is often a bone of contention. When approached to contribute some source of revenue to the district the non-profit organizations united and came to the conclusion that their presence added stature to the district and that this was payment enough. Many of the residents take umbrage at this attitude and have formed committees to curb further buying of land by these institutions within the district. This, of course, is not possible but it leads to much dissension.

Administrators, teachers, support staff and parents are involved in providing quality education in this school setting. The community is one of high socio-economic standing and therefore has very high expectations for their offspring. Children are involved in a great deal of after-school activities many of which have an academic bent. There are a few universities in the vicinity that offer enrichment classes to children after school and on Saturdays. Many parents enroll their children in these programs which run the gamut from interpretating literature to algebraic functions. A very large percentage of parents have college degrees and

all of the professions are represented within the district.

The faculty is a very hardworking group of people who try diligently to keep up with the newest programs introduced in education. Within the last year the faculty jointly chose a new reading series with a whole language focus. Curriculum, especially for the intermediate grades, has been rewritten by faculty committees concentrating on the whole language approach. The faculty strives for the best educational experience it can possibly offer the children in their charge. There is a wide range in ages and experience within this faculty, and this works to its advantage. Each individual has a commitment to the total growth and development of the school and cooperates to reach that end. A Building Advisory Committee is now in progress whose basic function is to discuss areas of teacher concern directly with the administration, and together look for solutions confronting the total school community. This committee is comprised of teachers from the primary, intermediate and special areas. These representatives volunteered for this assignment and spend many hours in making the school a better place to grow, succeed, and function for both staff and students.

The state education commissioner proposed a strategy in July of 1991 that could improve public education on all levels. This document offers a new approach that will continue and extend the effective things that faculty and

administration are already doing in education, by integrating them with new ideas and combining them into a single comprehensive plan. This compact is necessary if one is to address the changes that have taken place since the beginning of the 1900's. Educators working towards the year 2000 must confront the lack of emphasis on the role technology plays in their students' lives. Students need to address the fact that business has changed dramatically with the introduction of computer technology into every facet of the workplace. If public education does not sit up and take notice, it will fail and the educational systems presently in practice will further sink into mediocrity. All elements that contribute to the success of a public educational system must be tapped if satisfactory results are to be gained.

Author's Work Setting and Role

The primary function that the writer is involved in is one of educator, in a sixth-grade setting. Teaching within the elementary scene has been this writer's main thrust for the last 20 years. In 1992, a new committee was established to look at the climate of the school. The writer became the chairperson of that committee and within that capacity is taking a very careful look at all aspects of how this school functions. Since 1984 this writer has held the lead position on the Language Arts Committee. This committee has established a portfolio approach to evaluating progress,

across the elementary levels, in the area of language arts. Using this methodology has become extremely important as a measurement tool since the district has incorporated the Whole Language philosophy into its program. Much time and effort on this writer's part has gone into other committees: Grounds and Maintenance, Staff Recruitment and Social Studies. These committees are ongoing as the need arises. Within the last two months the writer has been involved in the interview process to hire an elementary guidance counselor. This process is very time-consuming and is done at the completion of a teaching day.

A master's degree in school administration has given this writer the opportunity to work closely with the administration on current problems. On the elementary level, the district does not have administrative coverage when a principal is not present within the building. In each of the buildings a teacher who holds a School Administrator/ Supervisor (SAS) certificate fills the role of principal in his/her absence. The writer has acted in this capacity for the last six years. Many administrative decisions have to be made on the spot and the writer has been involved from discipline problems to locating children who fail to arrive home on the bus. During the summers the district superintendent has also used the writer in an administrative role. In addition to teacher candidate interviewing, previously mentioned, the writer also has

written extensively in most areas of the elementary curriculum and has completed various necessary tasks to ensure a smooth September opening of school.

Chapter II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

Climate is defined in Webster (1993) as the prevailing influence or environmental conditions characterizing a group or period. The proper school climate is absolutely essential to the social and academic success of a learning institution. The school has a long-standing reputation of offering its students a "home away from home". A new principal now holds the position that was previously held by one man for 40 years. Change was not a word often employed at this elementary school; everything remained status quo. Just as society is facing major changes in the areas of knowledge, skills, and competencies, so are the students, and the educators who must prepare them for the future. Some of the nurturing techniques, presently in place, needed to be changed for teachers to meet the challenges that are forthcoming from every sector of society.

Noise was one of the main factors to be addressed. The halls were too often used as a gathering place for unsupervised students. Running in the halls was a common practice and led to many accidents that could otherwise be avoided. Chaos in the walkways of the school was further

compounded by the fact that the school foundation consists of 11 different levels. Stairs were used in the building process to answer the terrain problem with no consideration of how they would affect future school population. This multi-leveled building created access and mobility problems. Teachers needed to address the problems in the hallways and come up with workable solutions that the student body could cope with on a daily basis.

Cafeteria rules were almost nonexistent. Lunch was served at four different times. There were three lunch aides who were in charge of supervision. When a child was unruly, rude, or argumentative, there were no consequences for his/her behavior. Speaking to the child individually or sending the child to the office was the general practice which in turn created other problems. The children did not learn by their mistakes and perpetuated the same negative behavior patterns. By the time the last lunch group came into the cafeteria the room was usually filthy and unfit as a calm place to consume one's lunch.

The playground was another area of concern. There was a great deal of play area available to the children: two large fields, a play area equipped with climbing equipment, and a swing area. At best, there are two playground aides on duty who were responsible for the supervision in all the aforementioned areas. The aides were not properly trained to handle all situations that arose, nor were they able to

properly supervise the areas assigned. Hazards were also present on the playground that had not been addressed by grounds and maintenance personnel. Shrubbery was not properly pruned, poison ivy was not sprayed and gratings on school equipment were not checked at regular intervals. In one instance, a third grade student ran across the grating that coverd the oil intake valves for part of the building. The grating flipped over and the child fell into the hole. Luckily no serious injury was incurred by the child.

Assemblies were held in the gymnasium which functioned as both gymnasium and auditorium. Access to the room itself was through a door situated in the corner of the room. If the teacher entered first the class was unattended in the hall and if the teacher waited with the class there was no one to begin seating the students. This physical barrier led to immediate confusion because the children did not receive explicit directions as to where they should go upon entering this all-purpose room. Students had not been trained in the proper deportment while watching a performance. Their audience participation was unacceptable to most of the faculty, but little had been done to change its direction.

Teachers needed to work together to establish a positive work environment. Every teacher was effective within his/her own classroom, but each had to realize that a common set of rules and regulations had to apply to the student body as a

whole. When a teacher come directly in contact with a problem, he/she referred the child to the classroom teacher, sent the child to the office or simply ignored the incident. This gave the wrong message to the students who responded by committing the same infraction over and over again.

The majority of the children come from very affluent homes and were often over-indulged by their parents. It was not unusual to see a Game Boy or a new baseball mitt abandoned in the halls. Too many of the children placed little value on the advantages they had been given. They took them for granted and their interest in any one was fleeting. Their attention was not focused for long on any one topic. New "interests" were supported by the accoutrements that are available. Parents blamed the school when their children needed discipline. The school was very involved with some dysfunctional families and had taken over areas that were previously addressed at home. During one divorce case, the father was allowed to come to school on a weekly basis to have lunch with his daughter because he could not find any other time to see his child due to the restrictions placed on him by the court. This administrative decision was extremely disconcerting to the child involved and was allowed to continue over a period of two years, even though his presence was clearly rejected by the child.

Name calling and ethnic slurs were not uncommon within the school boundaries. The school population had changed over

the last decade and children with Asian, Afro-American and Native American backgrounds were part of the student body. Tolerance of others who appear "different" needed to be included within the very framework of the school. The mission statement of the school needed also be addressed at this juncture and the total school had to be made aware that prejudice will not be tolerated.

When the faculty and the administration jointly speak to the issue of a better school climate, improvement can be made. A school that works together to improve itself in its ability to function will be a successful school.

Problem Documentation

Two surveys were given to the faculty to see if they felt there was a need to implement new methods that could change the climate of the school. The first survey was given out at a general faculty meeting and was responded to by 20 full-time faculty members. The area of cleanliness received the lowest average score of 2.2 out of a possible 5. The average score 3.9 expressed that the faculty saw evidence throughout the school that the students can learn. Analyzing the answers to this questionnaire made the writer aware that most of the school faculty saw a need to improve many aspects of the school's climate.

A second survey was then employed by the writer (see Appendix A) and mailed home to the entire faculty. Seventeen responses were received. The following are the results.

Table I

Needs Assessment for Conflict Resolution

Question	Educators Response	Educators Surveyed
1. Conflicts do occur outside a supervised area.	17	17
2. Children question monitor's authority.	17	17
3. Children need to be aware of their responsibilities.	17	17
4. Children need concrete rules and directions.	17	17
5. Positive behavior should be acknowledged	14	17

Table II

Areas to be Addressed in Conduct Assessment

QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE
1. Conflicts do occur outside a supervised area (cafeteria, etc.)	7	10		
2. Lack of cooperation with monitors is evident.	12	5		
3. Children question monitor's authority.	16	1		
4. Children's activities seem to be non-directed.	9	8		
5. Noncompliance with rules and policies occur.	1	16		
6. Name calling and fighting result from conflict on playground, cafeteria, etc..	7	10		
7. Cliques form as a result of conflict.	12	5		
8. Stress and anxiety are evidenced in non-structured environments.		16	1	
9. Children can often be taught to redirect their energies.	5	12		
10. Children need to be made aware of their responsibilities.	17			
11. Rules should be gone over with children.	10	7		

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
12. Results of actions should be explained-know the consequences.	17			
13. Teachers should be directly involved with non-classroom conflict.	4	10	3	
14. Parents should be informed on serious indiscretions.	17			
15. Parents should be informed on minor infractions.	17			
16. There are clear procedures to deal with emergencies.	10	7		
17. Positive behavior is acknowledged frequently, students and staff feel appreciated.		14	3	
18. The principal and staff show respect, consideration and sensitivity to students and parents.	3	14		
19. Children need to be taught conflict resolution.	14	3		
20. Peer mediation should be considered.	15	2		
21. Children should be involved in the decision making process.	5	12		
22. Children need more concrete rules and directions.	14	3		

23. Assemblies can be used to introduce a program of caring and concern.	8	9
24. Assemblies to discuss issues should be held regularly.	9	8
25. If children learn how to solve problems they can come to avoid problems.	12	5

Causative Analysis

Problems always have a reason for being, a cause. Some causes are readily accessible while others are obscure and difficult to pinpoint. Educators need to be able to discern problems and establish the cause of the problem before a solution can be rendered.

Safety is a factor that every school must provide for the children in its charge. Accidents occurred too frequently on the playground because of insufficient and ineffective supervision. The district did not provide extra help, even though it had been requested through channels for the last three years. Conditions also existed on the playground that were unsafe. Grounds were not maintained with safety in mind. The entire grounds and maintenance crew had been reduced in size over the last five years. Two full-time employees and one part-time employee for the summer had to keep four schools and the administration building's grounds in shape throughout the year. The grounds that these buildings sit upon cover an area of approximately 52 acres. Bushes were not trimmed back sufficiently on the perimeters of the playground, due to the lack of sufficient help and children had fallen into them and had sustained injuries. Supervision was often difficult because of the tremendous areas that the children were allowed to utilize. Playground equipment was not checked on a regular basis to keep it in repair. Many of the altercations that occurred

during recess became quite serious because they were allowed to go on too long without adult intervention.

Cafeteria and playground aides were the same personnel, their title switched according to what position they were filling at the time. These women sent unruly children to the office on a regular basis because they did not have the wherewithal or the authority to enforce the school rules. Children questioned their ability to carry out a punishment and their only solution was to send the offenders to the office. This was also ineffectual for many times no one but the school secretaries were present to immediately handle the problem. The children then had to wait and a late reprimand was never too effective.

Accidents also occurred in the halls when the children were not paying attention to the rules. The halls have many stairs and blind turns. Running down these corridors, students often bumped into each other, ran one another down or were pushed out of the way, and little was done to stop these activities. Vision by school personnel was often limited because of the twists and multi-levels that exist within the building. Many times the offenders had disappeared before a person in authority reached the scene. Reports of accidents to the nurse had increased both from the playground and the internal building. Most of these accidents were minor but the numbers are showing a steady increase. Michael, a sixth grader, thought it was perfectly

acceptable to physically abuse a fourth grader who was defending his friend in a name-calling incident. Michael completely lost his temper and ended up dealing John a series of blows that seriously hurt John before someone came to deal with the problem. As a result of this altercation Michael was suspended from the playground for five days. In this incident and many others the cause of the disagreement was not discussed, just the punishment addressed.

The clientele of the school was changing and that change needed to be addressed in a positive manner. This new population wave had different and sometimes conflicting values and different criteria. Parents asked what the child wanted and often did not deal with what the child needed to grow into a healthy, productive individual. Motivation behind a child's behavior was not addressed or dealt with, just an accusing finger was pointed at the school for disciplining the child's action. Parents listened to what their child said and never questioned the premise from which his/her action originated. Taking responsibility for one's own action was not discussed for it was seen as too disturbing to the child. Parents took the blame for not getting in assignments, for being late to class, and a myriad of other responsibilities that belonged in the child's domain. Over-indulgence ran rampant in the school. Most of the students were so over-programed they have no time to themselves or time to be a child. Whatever they wanted the

parents were there to provide. As this parental control acted without a vision for the future, most of the children tended to be rather immature. Since everything was done for them, why should they do anything for themselves? Decision-making was extremely difficult for most of the children, because that was a skill that they had not yet acquired. Demands were not put on the child to produce and be a contributor to his/her environment. Parents shielded their children from taking active, responsible roles and allowed them to watch from the fringes as they handled the responsibilities that belonged to their children.

It was extremely difficult to get parents to admit that their children had a problem, especially if it was an emotional one. Testing required parental permission but too many parents refused to give permission to find out what caused their child's behavior problems. The school had the responsibility to prove that the child was in the wrong and was in real need of help. Parents offered excuses in defense of their children that did not concur with reality.

Teachers often found it easier to overlook the rules than to make the children in their care follow them. The responsibility felt by teachers was to their own classes not to the total school. Discipline was a central office concern, but all stakeholders must be aware of the on-going problems and solutions must be discussed.

Administration had just recently changed at this

elementary school and some change was in the offing. Children had been used to doing as they pleased with little or no follow-up on classroom discipline. The teachers had felt it useless to send errant students to the office because the results were so ineffective. Children would be talked to and then sent back to their classroom without consequences demanded for their actions.

The children were very outspoken and would question authority. Too many instances had been in the hands of the children that were causing the problem rather than under the control of the administration. The errant students were given a wide choice of consequences and therefore did not really understand if a problem was of serious or minor nature. At this juncture the offenders were allowed to slip though any disciplinary action and the deed went unpunished. In short, students were never expected or taught to become accountable for their actions.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

Since the publishing by the National Commission of Excellence in Education of Nation at Risk, (1983) the country has been aware that many American schools are not performing at accepted levels on achievement tests and that the national average of tests scores have been declining and have reduced the requirements on their school populations. Districts have to address the world as it is today. Technology must be

included in any educational program if the students of today are to be ready to face the world that they will graduate into in the future. Reynolds (1992) states that what may be effective in one area will vary according to the social environment of the school. There can be no blanket curriculum across the board, but curricula must be designed that will cope with environmental and socio-economic backgrounds.

In most of the literature the principal is cited as the instructional leader of the school, serving as the main, driving force behind whether a school will or will not succeed. Morris (1987) states that principals have the ability to hire teachers that reflect their philosophy and is then able to call upon these same teachers for advice when handling a specific situation. He further includes in his managerial style that the principal has the ability to socialize the parents into an understanding of the school's role both academically and socially. The principal is a key factor in determining the personal welfare of the staff. This belief is further supported by Ellett and Licata (1987). These writers state that the principal's performance influences the positive or negative sentiments of others about school operations and the quality of the school work environment.

A school staff is a highly educated group of people who want to be included in the decision-making process within the

framework of the school. Principals who use their staffs in these endeavors will create a positive attitude, for all are working for a common goal. Hoy, Tarter, and Witkoskie (1992) state that the principal should be open to suggestions by his/her team. The principal should give genuine praise and advice when needed. If these techniques are employed, the principal will be more successful. When constructive criticism comes into play it will be accepted as valid for the lines of communication have been kept open.

An environment free from stress is the ideal for all successful schools. Finn (1991) stresses the fact that schools are hard-pressed to support their part of the burden unless their environments are safe and tranquil. The student population needs to remain fairly stable, and assistance must be given to children who are ill, disturbed, handicapped, or otherwise in need of help. This statement is further supported by Joyce, Wolf, and Calhoun (1993) who point out that in order to provide a better life for our children one must examine the health of our schools and look for a way to improve them.

Technically, educators know that schools can be much better than they presently are. There is much enthusiasm surrounding educational reform, and the educators of today must capture it and channel it in the proper direction. Schools remain at the center of our communities and culture. McCune (1986) states that communities focus on schools as the

key to people's needs and look to them for future survival. McCune further states that principals need to work with their teachers to ensure successful program development and delivery. Worker participation at all levels is necessary if a school is to succeed. This falls under the heading of shared decision-making: empowering one's teachers and including their ideas in the whole problem-solving process.

The changing demographics of our society indicate that schools have to address all aspects of a child's total education. One cannot do this effectively if one does not include all people who influence the child's educational experience. The New Compact for Learning shows a need to delegate power between the administration, faculty, and parents to run an effective district. Presently committees are being formed to address the dictates of the compact. These committees are comprised of administrators, educators, staff personnel, students and parents whose job it is to provide the input and support necessary for the school's programs to succeed for all students.

School climate is the key to turning our schools around. When the school offers a positive climate for the students to function within, they excel. Eicholtz (1984) shows that there is a direct link between school excellence and effectiveness. He offers a nine-step improvement plan to attain this goal. The characteristics that would set a positive climate are: staff as a role model, highly visible principal, planning,

ongoing assessment, rewards and incentives, clearly defined policy, individualized instruction and high expectations, balanced curriculum, and parental involvement. If all these criteria are met Eicholtz feels that a school can be effective and it does not depend on the socioeconomic or ethnic composition of the student population.

Schaps and Solomon (1990) state that when students feel that they are contributing and their input is important they see themselves as an integral part of the school community and this helps all parts of their development. The intellectual, social and moral aspects of these students' lives are positively affected by how they perceive themselves within their school and their school community.

Murphy, Weil, Hallinger and Mitman (1982) state that policies which direct themselves to an orderly and safe school environment have through years of research been directly linked with student achievement. In the area of school climate and conflict resolution a need for change is necessary through a restructuring. When schools take the time to instill the facts of proper and appropriate behavior and set the guidelines for the student body to follow they convey a message of high expectations. This type of policy can only be put in place if principal, teachers, staff, parent, and students work together to make it happen.

Solving problems that occur on a daily basis is one of the most difficult tasks that face a school staff. Problems

exist in every facet of the school day. The origin of the problem can spring from numerous sources and involve few or many of the school community. Sprick (1990) states that problem solving, especially in a situation where emotions play a role, is very difficult for the student of today. Goleman (1992) emphasizes the fact that children in America need lessons on how to handle their emotions. They need to learn how to settle disagreements and they need to learn the strategies of getting along with their peers. It is necessary that children learn how to listen to fellow students and peacefully reconcile differences. Wisenthal (1993) states that conflict resolution programs are increasingly being used to help counter the rising violence in inner city and suburban schools throughout America. Conflict resolution offers the student a choice in dealing with any given incident rather than taking passive or aggressive action.

Raffini (1980) focuses on the fact that children are attention seekers. Some students feel it necessary to get attention by any means. Negative attention must be discouraged within the confines of school. Johnson, Johnson, and Burrett (1992) feel that if children are taught how to negotiate and are given opportunities to mediate the conflicts of their classmates, they will have gained in the area of negotiating. This skill is useful in all walks of our society. In "Talking it Out" (1989), a column in the

Harvard Education Letter, the article points out that young people are much more likely to resolve their differences when they sit down together and name what has been going on, without focus on blame, and work out a solution. Sometimes these solutions solve the problem and in other cases the solution has to be renegotiated. The result is the same in the end: the parties are talking and trying to work out an amiable solution.

Comer (1980) believes that helping children develop self-control, negotiation skills, and conflict management skills is as important to future life success as learning to read, write, and do arithmetic. Chapman (1990) indicates that conflict is generally seen as dysfunctional and must be controlled or channelled. It is up to the school community as a whole to offer this direction. In BOCES newsletter Board to Board (1990), in an article titled "Conflict resolution Program", this theory is supported. The article states that conflict resolution is now a major responsibility of the effective school and administrator.

Another aspect of conflict comes in when prejudiced feelings are expressed. Prejudice is at the base of our gang mentality. If it is allowed to fester it propagates hatred and leads to violent actions. Higuchi (1993) states that prejudice is not looking at the total person. Students do not need revenge, they need resolution. Conflicts should be handled with words to articulate the harm and find out

workable solutions. Every issue has a solution if the people involved are willing to listen to some possible solutions. Educators must teach the tools to deal with conflicts and show the students that resolutions are possible.

Across America one fact is ringing true: schools must change in order to successfully survive and provide meaningful educations to children across the nation. Schlechty (1990) clearly states that public education must be restructured if it is to be a viable force in the 1990's and beyond. It will take the full support of all educators to make this happen. If this does not take place, then public education will lose its place as the standard of American education.

The ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus wrote that "Character is destiny" and that is one aspect our schools must subscribe to today. Many of our school problems come from the break down of the basic morals that were the backbone of this country. Lickona (1993) cites these breakdowns as coming from the disintegration of the family unit, the deterioration of civility in everyday life, greed, an ever present sexual culture that fills all aspects of lives across America, the violence that racks our communities, child abuse and other less obvious areas that lead to the moral decay that is present in the 1990's. If restructuring is feasible, then all the component parts that make a school effective will have to include basic morality

as part of character education.

Short and Rinehart (1992) state that empowerment of teachers is another component part that goes into restructuring schools. This and all other programs will increase our schools' greater organizational effectiveness. With administration and faculty working together as one cohesive unit the goals set forth in its mission statement will be more easily acquired.

Chapter III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

School needed to be a place where students had the opportunity to learn and be able to function at their highest level. Years of research had concluded that the most effective school was the one that would provide the right environment in which the student body could function. The primary goal was the establishment of an atmosphere in which the students and staff at the writer's elementary school could function to their highest level.

Expected Outcomes

The playground was the first area to be addressed. Uniform rules were established for the students to follow so that if an infraction occurred the rule breaker would know exactly what rule was violated and what consequence would take place for his/her action. Grade level six was to be representative of the student population. This grade level consists of 39 students who had the same recess period on a daily basis. The rules were spelled out for them and their input was asked, but the final decision would be in the writer's and the principal's hands. Listing of the rules

would be in a prominent place for all to see, and would remain there as a reminder of the behavior that was expected of the student body as a whole. The improvement rate would be 30 out of the 39 students (see Appendix B).

The next level of concern would be the cafeteria. Once again a set of specific rules would be applicable to the workings of the cafeteria that the children would be expected to follow. The same group of sixth graders would be observed to see if the rules in place were meaningful and sufficient. The improvement rate would be 30 out of the 39 students observed (see Appendix C).

The third specific objective that this writer had established was to institute a set of manageable rules to deal with hallway behavior. The hallways would be less congested with fewer accidents after rules were instituted that would allow the children to know what was acceptable and what was not acceptable. Expected outcome should be a definite drop in hallway accidents. The improvement rate would be 30 of the 39 students (see Appendix D).

School assemblies had been a bone of contention for some time. The children had no rules to follow and therefore could not be held responsible for their unruly behavior. Assemblies would be more orderly and students would have a positive experience when a set group of workable rules are put in place. The improvement rate should be 30 out of the 39 students who will be able to comply to the new set of

rules that will govern attendance at productions (see Appendix E).

Student leaders would be trained in conflict resolution. They would encourage and mediate peaceful ways to accomplish problem-solving using peer mediation. This technique would be used on the minor infractions to begin with and hopefully, as time passes, be able to encompass problems of more significance. Infractions would decrease in number, for the school community will be working for a common goal. The improvement rate would be 26 out of the 39 students participating in the survey. Students in grade six would be given a survey to see what they considered problem areas where conflict resolution could be applied (see Appendix F). Some of these areas could be addressed directly by the peer mediators and others could be addressed in role-playing activities.

Tolerance for ethnic differences was a new phenomenon in this school district. Until recently this district was 95% Caucasian. Now the district finds itself a mix of many ethnic backgrounds, including Indian, Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Afro-American, and Native American and there was little understanding of the different cultures and customs. Children must be made aware that people throughout the world are different, but we must live together as a world community in harmony and peace in order to survive. The concept that all men are equal must be understood and accepted. A

decrease in name-calling and ethnic slurs would show an improvement rate of 28 out of the 39 students involved in the survey. A questionnaire would be sent home to find out the family background of every child in this elementary school (see Appendix G). A survey was sent to the children (See Appendix H), to see if the children had any knowledge of cultures other then their own. It was extremely important that children who react with one another on a daily basis understand and accept the fact that differences in upbringing were acceptable and understandable.

Parents are also an integral part of the school community. Parents must be made aware of the changes that take place within their children and be better prepared to deal with adversity. Too often parents thought that the solution to all difficulties was the job of the school and they did not have to cope with a particular problem. On the other hand there were parents who believed that the school had no authority in certain areas and they would always have full control of the situation. The improvement rate here would be 25 out of the 39 sets of parents that have children in the present sixth grade. A questionnaire will be used at the completion of the parent's seminars (see Appendix I).

Measurement of Outcomes

On the playground the rules would be spelt out so that no student would have difficulty knowing what was expected of

them. The rules would be displayed in a prominent place within the school as a constant reminder to the student-body that a set form of behavior was required. The improvement rate would be 30 out of the 39 students (see Appendix B). In each of the areas cited on this checklist, four were being violated on an on-going basis. The improvement rate would show that three areas have met a successful conclusion and that one area still needed attention.

The same group of sixth graders would be observed to see if the rules in place in the cafeteria were meaningful and sufficient. The improvement rate would be 30 out of the 39 students (see Appendix C). Five of the areas were constantly being violated. The writer saw an improvement rate that would successfully address three of these areas, leaving two areas, to concentrate on, in the future.

The hallways were a constant source of chaos. The same group of sixth graders would be observed for proper deportment while traversing the halls. The improvement rate would be 30 out of the 39 students. Five of the problem areas listed (see Appendix D) were constantly occurring. The improvement rate, with the diligent help of the entire staff would leave the writer with four areas dealt with successfully and one to give further attention to, at a later date.

Assembly programs would show an improvement rate of 30 out of the 39 students being surveyed. These students would

out of the 39 students being surveyed. These students would be able to comply to the new set of rules that would govern their attendance at productions (see Appendix E). Three areas needed to show an immediate improvement, if production on a school-wide basis were to continue to take place. There would remain three other areas that would still need to show later improvement.

In the area of Conflict Resolution the writer was looking to reduce the then current three incidents per day to one incident that would be immediately addressed through the proper channels. The improvement rate would be 26 out of the 39 students participating in the survey.

After weeks of sharing multi-cultural backgrounds, name calling and ethnic slurs would show an improvement rate of 28 out of the 39 students involved in the survey. This improvement rate could be measured by the number of incidences that were reported from the areas of loose supervision: cafeteria, playground, halls and auditorium. A record of offenses would be kept on file in the office and the improvement rate would show a decrease to one a day by the completion of this plan. It was extremely important that children who reacted with one another on a daily basis understood and accepted the fact that differences in upbringing were common and were based on different cultural backgrounds.

Parents are an integral part of the school and their

cooperation is needed in dealing with their children. Some parents had difficulty in dealing with their children and the writer would like to see an improvement rate of 25 out of the 39 sets of parents that have children in the present sixth grade class. Improvement could be measured here by keeping records of notes sent by parents that excused their children from responsibilities that they should have been held accountable for on a daily basis. The number would reduce from the current five per week, to one per week. A questionnaire would be used at the completion of the parent's seminars (see Appendix I).

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

The available literature indicates that proper climate is conducive to better learning. In all areas of research the facts speak for themselves: a proper learning environment is one that offers an atmosphere that is conducive to learning by offering a calm and tranquil place to learn and study. The BOCES newsletter of January/February 1990 stated that school districts can turn problems into solutions by involving the students and the school's staff in conflict management teams. This is feasible when there is cooperation across the line within the school district. Actually this is a worthwhile concept to put it into practice when dealing with an entire faculty. Cooperation of the faculty will lead to a more unified school whose networking will be supportive and beneficial to all.

Murphy, Weil, Hallinger, and Mitman (1982) state that when policies are in place and the staff makes sure they are enforced, it is telling the students that inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. These policies must be enforced by all in concert, it must be a joint effort by the

entire staff. The message that the students hear is; school is for learning and a calm environment will prevail. Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, and Ouston (1979) are of the opinion that student achievement is always linked to the type of atmosphere within which he/she must function. Student achievement always shows a high degree of excellence in a school that promotes an orderly and safe environment.

"Talking it Out" (1989) in The Harvard Educational Letter states that when a school employs mediation programs, it changes the way that conflicts are resolved. The most effective of these programs are school-based and they train a small number of students, who in turn will work with the rest of the school community. BOCES (1988) advocates empowering student leaders with peer counseling skills. This can be accomplished through training by professionals who deal with conflict resolution. In both of these documents the end goal is to establish a more workable environment in which the student body has a voice, and could therefore have ownership and understanding of changes that are to take place within the academic setting. "Safe School Strategies and Actions" (1989) in Safe Schools: A Planning Guide for Action professes that even when schools are faced with complex problems, solutions can be accomplished by incorporating prevention, intervention and restructuring programs. These programs have to be carefully orchestrated with well-established goals.

Teaching children to get along with one another is one of the primary concerns of an effective school. Higuchi (1993) states that when groups understand each other's ethnic differences they will be more tolerant. It is her goal to have students develop strategies to deal with their own prejudices and to be able to sustain their self-esteem when they themselves become the targets of prejudice.

Effective schools that project a calm atmosphere are further supported by Townsend-Butterworth (1992) when she speaks of the ten common denominators that go into the make-up of an effective school. A visitor can tell if a school is engaged in educating its charges to the best of its ability. There is a sense of excitement and enthusiasm that prevails within the building. Students are happy, busy, interested, and involved in the learning process. Teachers are also animated, involved and responsive to the children's needs. Good schools are always looking for a way to grow and improve. They question what they are doing and are always open to new ideas and suggestions that would better the programs that they presently have in place. Effective schools can be very different but each of them has a mission and a strategic plan to attain its goals.

Another approach to school climate is effective character education. Brooks and Kann (1993) state that character education generates a common language and culture that allow members of the school community to reward behavior

that is consistent with its philosophy. The total school is involved in this program and visual presentations are displayed to keep the student body focused on the words, concepts and behaviors that are all part of this program. Students spend a great deal of their day at school and if they adhere to the tenets of this program they will acquire the words, concepts, behaviors and skills that will contribute to good conduct, ethical decision-making and a wholesome environment for learning.

Bonstingl (1992) focuses on schools that are cooperation-based. Teachers and administrators are part of a team working toward the same goals. Schools are places where students and teachers alike work at getting better and better at what they do. Instruction offers multi- and cross-discipline learning. The students' performances improve because the learning styles and teaching styles are varied and interesting.

A positive environment makes a school a place where both staff and students want to spend a great deal of their time because it is a good place to be. Larson (1992) further states that a negative environment can destroy the attitudes of both staff members and students and make them disinterested in what they are producing. Motivation and morale can be boosted by the attitude and behavior of the board of education of any community. They can lend their

support to the administrative staff so they can concentrate on what is truly important in an effective school environment.

Description and Justification for Solution Selected

Proper school climate could also be nurtured within the confines of the school. In-service training on issues of conflict resolution for administrators, support staff, and faculty could offered. The district could call upon BOCES to provide them with a qualified trainer able to instruct the staff in conflict resolution and program management. Videos are also available, some of which, are very specific and deal in depth with school problems (see Appendix J). One such Video is Playground Discipline that deals with positive techniques for recess supervision. The administration and faculty could also stress the Quest program, already in place, that would teach students responsibility while building self-esteem. Involving parents in seminars on parenting skills could be directed by the elementary guidance counselor. The parents would be given a choice as to what issues they want to discuss. Small groups could be formed so the participants will feel comfortable in discussing items that are troublesome to them.

Multi-cultural issues are being discussed across the nation. Since the district needed to address this problem, it seemed appropriate to set aside a two week period of time

that would be directed at understanding other cultures. This would help to provide a better understanding of ethnic differences. Each class would be assigned a specific country that is not part of the curriculum: China, Korea, Pakistan, Japan are but a few. Assignments would be distributed and this activity would culminate in a fair where each class would tell something from the customs and the culture of the country it researched. Each teacher would be provided with a list of activities that could be employed at this time (see Appendix K).

Many parents were active in the Parent Teacher Group and at many of these meetings they expressed an interest in being exposed to the current thinking on parenting skills. The majority of the women requesting added information on this topic were college graduates who realized the absolute necessity of putting forth their best efforts in rearing their children. They were not interested in the philosophical approach but wanted concrete advice on what was best for their children. Seminars would be started that would involve interested parents and the elementary guidance counselor. Topics under discussion would be selected by the group on a "as needed" basis. Starting with a prepared list seemed to be helpful, so the group could pick from and add to, as other areas of discussion pertinent to their situations arose. The most popular topics come from a wide list, but the most utilized areas in these types of

discussion are: discipline, over-protection, time management (of their children's time), over-programming youngsters, influencing their choice of friends, and knowledge of programs that would help them keep their children substance free in the future.

Many areas needed to be addressed if a true change in the climate of an organization was to take place effectively. A strategic plan of action had to be worked out in detail if the goal was to be successful. The faculty needed to be well informed of the process and then the progress of programs put into place. They needed to be made part of the team effort and to have ownership in what was taking place to change the climate of the school.

Beck and Hillar (1986) state that when employees are empowered, their creative skills are available to the organization. Empowering teachers will make them part of the decision-making process and allow them input into the accomplishment of the goals. In a positive workplace people feel free to discuss new ideas and put them into practice. Most of the staff is very goal orientated and sets its sights at a high level of achievement.

Students needed to be informed of changes within the normal operating system of the school. Rules were changed and an assembly was held to inform the student body as a whole, what was expected of them. This had to be reinforced by the classroom teacher within his/her individual classroom.

One would not expect a student body to conform to a set of rules and regulations unless they understood them and were given the chance to have them explained to them in detail.

At this juncture students were able to add suggestions and had their ideas taken seriously. Unless the total school had ownership in the project to improve the school's climate it would not work. This progress was slow and could not be rushed for so many factors came into play. One had to go back to all involved (see Appendix L) which included all of the stakeholders within the school community. Each one of these people had a commitment to change and want that change to succeed. They cooperated in its implementation and offered the rewards where necessary and the reprimands where needed.

Children realized that each of their actions held consequences; they were responsible for their actions. An organization's effectiveness would reflect itself in the attitude of the stakeholders that were involved in the organization. Improving the quality of life and relationships in the school organization was absolutely necessary in the process of change. The Climate Committee was the spear-head of this project. They were responsible to set a plan into action and have those directives followed and implemented by the other stakeholders. The writer was chairperson of this committee which was comprised of the principal, four teachers, and three parents. The opportunity

to establish a safer and more manageable environment appealed to all of these major stakeholders.

The writer was prepared to institute a twelve week program, in order to provide a more nurturing and caring atmosphere that would foster support for the internal organization. Quest, a self awareness program and D.A.R.E., a substance abuse program were already in place within the district. Both of these programs would be utilized during this time.

A program of change and initiative cannot just be introduced, many steps had to be pursued before restructuring of a school's climate could be deemed a success. Extensive reading and research into how other schools worked out similar problems had to be a first step. The impact of how this restructuring would affect the organization had to be of prime consideration. Administrative approval had to be received before the project could even start. Faculty awareness, in order for them to have input, was absolutely essential. The school community, all personnel, children and parents, had to be involved in the process. Their active roles in the total program would lead to its success if they saw the value of the project and followed it step by step. When one understands, helps implement, makes suggestion, and is listened to, a feeling of ownership takes place. The committee needed to put checklists into place, in order to be able to evaluate the plan's progress at its different stages.

This came in the form of surveys and questionnaires. From the outset the committee and all those involved had to realize that all changes would not take place at the same time. A priority list needed to be worked upon and presented to the general faculty. It would be up to the faculty to decide which areas of concern would be addressed, and in what order. It was felt, by the writer, if the staff had a voice in the decision-making process, they would feel part of the entire program. Their support would be given more freely and the outcome of the project would be a positive one.

Calendar Plan

At the start of the first week a Climate Committee meeting was called for Monday at 3:30 to discuss ways of improving the school's atmosphere. The committee, after deliberation, decided to focus on the need to establish better control in areas where direct supervision was not present. The playground, the cafeteria, the halls, and the auditorium were areas where this problem manifested itself to the greatest degree. A common strategic plan of attack had to be worked, keeping the school's mission statement in full focus. The main theme of this statement was to create a place where learning, reflection, and thoughtfulness prevail. With this in mind the committee set its first goal: to provide a safe and quiet environment in which students could reach their maximum potential.

The committee then worked on parameters within which the students must learn to function. The first area of discussion was the playground and the absolute necessity of making it a safer place during recess. It was decided to use a checklist, and if rules were infringed upon by the students, make them accountable for their actions (see Appendix B). It was also decided to provide each of the playground supervisors with a piece of red tape. This tape would be used in an extreme emergency to let the office know that help had to be called immediately for there was dire need of assistance in the playground area.

The next area of discussion was the cafeteria. The parents on the committee were most interested in changing some of the conduct that they had seen exhibited while the children were supposed to be eating. Discussion of how to speed up the serving process down to the lack of supervision that allowed the students to be rather obstreperous while eating their lunches was investigated. The committee decided to propose a checklist and a chart system to the faculty. The charts would show which tables were following the new rules, and a system of rewards would be set up to encourage proper behavior. Each table would receive a sticker when their behavior met the criteria established. When 20 stickers were attained a prize would be awarded to that table, but the remaining tables would continue to work toward their 20 stickers. Everyone could be a winner.

These proposals were put forth to the faculty at their weekly 3:30 meeting on March 9, 1994 during the second week of the proposal. At the same time the committee visited two local schools in different districts to see how their recess and lunch programs were handled. The two schools compared in size and type of population with the writer's school. The committee found that the schools visited had similar lunch problems, but their recess areas were more restricted for the school population and therefore easier to supervise. The faculty decided to start improving the climate of the school by concentrating its efforts on the entire lunch-time period, for they also felt that this was a major problem area. Signs were made, by the writer, to instruct the students on the new rules and to let them know exactly what was expected of them in this new program. During this time the writer met with other faculty members to elicit their advice and input on the wording of the rules and what areas should be stressed. Bryson (1988) states that a strategic plan should create a set of strategies that effectively link the organization and its parts to the external environment.

The Climate Committee met with the entire faculty on March 16, 1994. At this meeting, which began the third week, each step of the plan to improve cafeteria and playground behavior was discussed at length. The teachers were given the forms that the supervising personnel would be using in both of these areas and were asked for their input. One of

the teachers suggested that the classroom teacher's name be added to the bottom of the form. Other recommendations were asked for, and the committee noted that they were open to change during this transitional period.

It was further agreed by the classroom teachers that they would introduce these new procedures to their individual classes and that the plan would be put into action on Monday March 21, 1994. Each teacher agreed to take his/her class on a walk-through of the new rules and regulations. Classes were to be given a dry run of what would be expected of them and what would take place as result of their actions. Children at this time would be instructed in the meaning of the piece of red tape and be made aware of the seriousness of the situation.

Time was spent on the incentive program for the table with the 20 stickers. It was considered fair by the entire faculty and they liked the idea that no one table would be designated the WINNER. One problem the committee met was the reward funding for the table with the 20 stickers. This was not going to be a one-shot deal, but an on-going process. Finally after much discussion a reward of Dunkin Donuts was agreed upon for this money could be taken out of petty cash. If money ran short the committee agreed upon a fund raiser, such as a bake sale or similar activity. The faculty further suggested that the introduction of the plan should take place during the remainder of the third week, in order to put it

into working order on Monday of week four. The committee agreed to this change in its schedule and delegated specific jobs to its team members.

It was agreed upon by the committee to met with the faculty again on March 24, 1994 to discuss how the new plan was progressing. The faculty was asked to keep a check list of the pros and cons of the program. This list would follow the rules that students must follow, proposed in Appendix C.

On Thursday, March 10, 1994 classroom teachers discussed with their classes the new rules and how they would be applied. The children were asked to submit any ideas that they may have to better implement this new program the following day. Suggestions were made from size of the stickers to the privileges to be earned from good behavior. One child suggested that a designated leader be chosen for each table and this would rotate around the table on a weekly basis. The leader would be expected to make sure the table was clean and that no student violated the rules. Since this was a first step in conflict resolution this proposal was readily accepted by the committee. A memo was sent to the faculty to announce this slight adjustment and to give each teacher time to select, in any way he/she saw fit, the first leader at each table.

On Friday of week three the committee met again and jointly made the signs and provided the supervisors with packets of stickers, cafeteria slips, and playground

equipment availability. When the children had enough to do on the playground, altercations were limited. All was in place to start implementating this new program by 4:30 on March 18, 1994.

At the beginning of the fourth week the classes were reminded of the new rules and teachers, before they dismissed for recess and lunch, discussed the parameters within which the students must remain. Charts of excellence were discussed and the color of each class's chart was gone over to make sure the children had a full understanding of how this new system would work.

Monday morning the supervisors of the playground and the cafeteria came in for a meeting with the writer. Proper deportment in both the cafeteria and playground were discussed at length. Each supervisor was provided a packet for the playground and the cafeteria that contained the forms that were to be used in this new program. A video on playground supervision was shown at this time and one of the supervisors asked if she could take it home to view again. The writer then encouraged the other aides to do the same and made the film available upon the asking.

During the week the students were very receptive to the plan and were rather competitive from table to table to gain the greatest number of stickers. The behavior in the cafeteria showed a general improvement and a better attitude was exhibited by all. The sixth grade showed a general

improvement in 32 out of the 37 children involved in the new program. During the week the sixth grade lunch period was quieter and cleaner than it had been in previous weeks. On the playground the general behavior of the school as well as the sixth grade showed a definite improvement. This was partially due to the fact that there was sufficient equipment available to use during the recess period. The new blacktop was once again usable, after the snow and ice melted, and this allowed a rather large ice free area for the children to use for running, playing basketball, and jumping rope. This was the first week that showed a rather astonishing change in the sixth grade recess. There was only one reported incident of disagreement and that was handled swiftly and efficiently by the supervisors in place on the playground.

During this fourth week the writer kept a careful check on the two areas being monitored. It was absolutely amazing how the students involved rose to the occasion. They tried very hard to make the new rules and regulations work and became very involved in that process.

The fifth week began with an introduction of the hallway rules. Some of these were previously in place and new ones were introduced. An emphasis was placed on designated areas in the walkways to stop to allow other classes to pass or to make sure the class stayed together as a total unit. Since the hallways were narrow and have stairs at many intervals, single lines staying to the right were stressed. Quiet in

the hallways by all concerned was made a major issue. It was pointed out to the children that many teachers left their classroom doors open at various times of the day and they would be disturbed by noise in the corridors. Running, the largest problem, received a great deal of attention. Each teacher reviewed the safety factor that went along with running in the halls. The students were advised that they would be sent back to their place of origin and would have to report to the office to check off their offense on the master hallway check list. Using the sixth grade as an example for the school, the writer set a goal of 30 out of 39 complying with established rules by the end of the first week. This number was not attained. The first week compliance rate was 24 out of 39. Although this showed a slight reduction, based on the sixth grade, the school as a whole did not show a significant reduction in hallway incidences during this week. On Friday children were given reminders of the rules and what was expected of them. The teachers were, for the most part, very cooperative. There were a few who did not follow through on the check list, but just reprimanded the offenders. This section of improving the climate of the school will only work if all concerned are consistent in the follow through. The writer sent out a reminder to the faculty with the week's statistics and a thank you for cooperating in the process.

A constant check was made by the writer during the

fifth week on the cafeteria and the playground. The leadership switch gave some of the primary grades trouble and they were confused about who was supposed to take over the role of table leader during the second week of the new cafeteria rules. The writer intervened and and once again explained the process until understanding was exhibited. The supervisors reported only one "major mess" that was addressed immediately and the clean-up met everyone's criteria. The supervisors, unknown to the writer, divided the stickers into two categories; one for a clean table and one for a quiet table. At this rate it was possible for a table to receive two stickers per day. This was getting very expensive! By the end of the second week one third grade table had 18 stickers and there were a few other tables in close contention. The primary grades were actually earning at a faster rate than the intermediate grades. Excitement ran high among the upper grades but it was more difficult for them to stay within the parameters of the program in order to earn multiple stickers,i.e. being quiet and staying in assigned seats.

At the beginning of the sixth week a scheduled assembly on School Club Activities was held. Before the assembly began, with the entire school body present, a new set of rules were set forth that would apply to all assemblies in the future. Each class was assigned a specific seating area and the classroom teacher was given the option of assigning

or not assigning seats in his/her designated area. This program began with the Pledge of Allegiance and "America", then the classes were told to be seated. This was stressed as how all future assemblies would begin, then a new set of new rules were introduced before the actual assembly went forward. It was emphasized at this time that the student body would have time to have input into these changes at the next assembly which would include an open forum for discussion purposes.

The next assembly that included only grades four through grades six was called on April 7th, 1994. This assembly was directed by the principal and its main purpose was to discuss the responsibilities that the intermediate grades had to the school. All of the areas where new programs were in progress were discussed. The principal as well as the teachers present spoke of attitudes that students set for one another, and how each intermediate student should act as a role model for the primary students. If the younger students see the older ones getting out of line and not working within the parameters of established rules then they will do the same. Consequences were discussed and the faculty brought up the idea of having some of the students directly involved in the primary stages of dealing with on-going problems. This led to a lively discussion in which practically everyone in the intermediate grades volunteered for this "Committee". The assembly had to be reminded four times that they were too

noisy or that they must remain seated. The writer did not feel that they were out of hand at any time, but were very enthusiastic to become part of a team that would directly address problems that existed within the school climate. This was a perfect introduction into peer mediation and how problems are settled democratically.

This week the supervisors in the cafeteria ran into a problem. Some of the classes were peeling off the stickers from one table's chart and putting them on their own table chart. It was too difficult to ask the monitors to keep written records of each table, for there just was not enough time. The writer met with the supervisors and together we decided to change to a stamp pad method, since this could not be altered. The children were not as enthusiastic, but settled quickly into this new routine when they realized they would not be penalized and altering the charts would now be a difficult matter.

The hallways had definitely become quieter, and fewer teachers complained of being disturbed. At the faculty meeting this week, April 6, 1994, running in the halls was still an issue to be dealt with firmly for safety sake. The same student names appeared in the office and it was decided by the faculty that firmer action would have to take place. It was decided that the principal would speak directly to each of these multi-offenders and find out why it was so difficult for them to comply to rules that often meant their

own safety.

This week the playground had no serious incidents and the supervisors felt that the students were occupying their recess time in a more profitable way then just a few weeks earlier. More of the student body were participating in outside activities at recess.

During the seventh week of the program the emphasis was on peer mediation used in conflict resolution. The district employed an instructor in peer mediation to give training to grades four, five and six over a period of two weeks. Each grade level received a two hour instructional time where ways to handle difficult situations were deliberated. The instructor employed the use of role playing to demonstrate how the proper attitude and correct information changed a volatile situation into one that could be solved. The students enjoyed acting out the different parts, but definitely needed more practice in problem solving. Mary P. took a very strange turn in her role playing. She was assigned a role where she accused Stacey B. of copying her homework. Her homework was never returned and she was the one who had to explain the missing work to the teacher. At first she was very annoyed with Stacey B., but in the end she defended Stacey B. in front of the peer mediators. She actually did not want to hurt Stacey B.'s self-esteem and ended up feeling sorry that she brought this problem up for discussion. The D.A.R.E. officer, Jackie F., used this week

to concentrate on self-esteem and not putting our friends down in order to save face.

Voting on the first team of peer mediators was quite eventful in the sixth grade. All decided they would be perfect for the job. Selection for two peer mediators from each of the sixth grades was finally completed. The children in each class nominated five candidates. The candidates on the following Wednesday presented their opinions of how they viewed the role of peer mediator, and then a closed ballot took place. It was decided by the classes that this would be a rotating position changing on a monthly basis, or as needs came up for consideration. The other grade levels followed the same procedure and by the end of week eight all six peer mediation teams were in place.

In the cafeteria rewards were given to seven more tables during this week. The only lunch group that was still having difficulties was grade 4-5 lunch/recess period. Fourth grade proved to be the troublesome area. The writer then observed this lunch period and noticed that most of the problem stemmed from one table of boys who annoyed all the surrounding tables. They were kept in from recess and the problem was discussed with them. The writer suggested that it may be better if they were split up, but they pleaded for a second chance . The chance was granted, conditionally. If they persisted in their present pursuits they would be split up and they would forfeit recess for one week. They agreed

to this condition and appointed a new table leader.

Week eight was a repeat of week seven in the area of peer mediation used in conflict resolution. This week the emphasis was on the fourth grade. A mediator from the private sector met with the fourth grades on Monday, April 18th and Wednesday, April 20th where he discussed what conflict resolution was and how disagreements can be solved in a peaceful and orderly manner. He did the same type of role playing with the fourth grades and received some very favorable responses. It was very gratifying to see how these 10 year olds handled the situations that were presented to them. John C. felt very strongly that Michael F. should be punished for starting a fight on the playground, but he felt the altercation merited limited time out from recess accompanied by a written apology. The writer felt that this was a very mature decision for someone of John's age and stage of development. The fourth grades voted on their peer mediators on Friday, April 22nd and all was in place in the intermediate grades to begin peer mediation in earnest.

The cafeteria had its best week yet. The supervisors were very pleased with the general behavior, including the fourth grade boys at the "troublesome" table. Their new table leader established a special set of rules and each member of the table agreed to abide by these rules, which included: table cleaning was everybody's responsibility, speak softly, and stay in your seat unless you ask to leave

it. The boys were extremely cooperative because they did not want to be separated.

Behavior in the halls continued to show a marked improvement. One of the sixth grades was asked to be quiet while they were going from a special back to their classroom. This incident reminded the writer to speak to the substitute teacher and inform him of the rules in place and the type of conduct that was expected from each class and individual while in the hallways of the school. Once aware of what was the proper hallway conduct the substitute teacher did make an effort to comply to the rules.

The ninth and tenth weeks introduced the theme of multiculturalism to the grades. A survey was sent home to every family at the beginning of the twelfth week. (see Appendix G) This survey, when tallied, showed that the student body represented 50 nations around the world and included every continent except Australia and Antarctica. At the time of the winter Olympics the writer, with the help of another teacher, put together a showcase on Norway. During the ninth week another international showcase featured Croatia, Bosnia, and a map showing the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. Two guest speakers came to the school and told from first hand experience how the people of Croatia and the refugees from Bosnia were trying to survive in a world that was shattered. Both of these speakers had just returned from witnessing the atrocities that were taking place in the

former Yugoslavia. On Friday, April 29, 1994 a lip-sync performance was held and contributions were solicited for refugees from Bosnia and the people of Croatia. (see Appendix M) The response from the children and their families was truly inspiring.

The writer met with the Parent Teacher Group on Tuesday, April 26th to discuss possible ways that the yearly school fair could adopt the theme of multiculturalism. Making flags of the nations that the school community represented was discussed and the writer agreed to speak to the art department and elicit their help. Food of various nations was discussed and a small committee was formed to seek out volunteers who would make finger food for a tasting table of international food. Costumes and dances that showed ethnic heritage were also discussed and the writer volunteered to put out a letter asking the community for its help. (see Appendix N)

On Wednesday, April 27th the writer met with the faculty and reported on the meeting with the parents and the direction that Muticultural Awareness was taking. The faculty was very supportive of the theme of the fair, but felt it was too difficult, at this time, to do individual research on cultures, customs, and beliefs of a particular area of the world. It was decided that the multicultural theme would be addressed by each classroom teacher and would be followed up with readings that represented the areas being

discussed.

Tuesday, May 3rd the writer met with a small PTG group and finalized what would be in the "Multicultural Fair" this year. Flags of all nations would be present, a food tasting area including international coffees would be included, games and craft areas would represent different countries, and life size cut outs would depict different ethnic dress. The response to teaching ethnic dancing was less than enthusiastic so the idea was dropped from this year's agenda. Each small group was given a specific assignment and the 1994 fair started to fall into place.

The students' attention during the two assemblies on Croatia and Bosnia was to be applauded. Even though the speaker on Croatia was a little beyond their full understanding, they were attentive and asked some thought provoking questions at the end of the presentation. The speaker on the Bosnia refugee camp was received with equal attention and polite, well-intended questions.

Halls, cafeteria, and playground areas were almost free of incidents. At the end of the tenth week the sixth grade class decided to protest the use of styrofoam in the cafeteria. Although this could have merit, the way they went about it showed lack of good judgment. The writer with the help of the other sixth grade teacher quieted their vocal protestations and explained that their cause may be just but that their methodology was not acceptable. They listened and

the supervisors gave them time to discuss how they could get their point over in a democratic and acceptable way. This discussion was led by the peer mediators from each of the sixth grade classes. The students as a group decided to go on a writing campaign including petitions. This was acceptable to the administration and the faculty.

During the eleventh week the writer looked at the total picture of what was accomplished and what still needed reinforcement. The cafeteria showed a steady improvement as the implementation of the rules were enforced. The goal of a calmer and cleaner cafeteria was met and the reward system worked extremely well. The rewards will have to be rethought in the future for with young children the same reward system never works for an extended period of time. Playground deportment changed from very disorganized play into more game orientated activities. Halls were much quieter and teachers were able to leave their doors open as the warmer weather approached.

The teachers, in general, thought that the effort was a success and want to see these practices continued in the future. It was agreed upon by the entire staff that this sort of an undertaking will only be effective if the entire faculty acts in concert and consistently reinforces the goals that have been established.

It was decided by the writer and the Climate Committee that a parent questionnaire would not be appropriate at this

time. Recently the parents have been deluged with messages requesting their aid and help on many projects around the school. The Multicultural Fair had made many demands upon parents' time and the committee felt that any further parent involvement at this time would be "Over Kill". During the course of the writer's practicum much encouragement and positive feedback was communicated to the Climate Committee.

A new showcase was installed this week featuring Russia. Russian heritage ranked first in the school community and many parents sent in books and other artifacts depicting Russian customs and culture. This case was the focus point from which the fair, that would take place on May 21st, was advertised. The writer met again with the president of the PTG and made the final plans for the fair. People were assigned to activities and each special area was rechecked to see if the people in charge had enough workers and if they had the materials that they needed to operate their area.

The twelfth and final week saw a flurry of activities. Much of the writer's time was spent on the last minute preparations for the fair. Children were asked to help out on many of the activities that would make up the international flavor of the fair. The flags of many nations were completed in the art room and parents made cardboard cut outs of costumes of other nations that were represented in the school. Friday May 20, 1994 saw voluteers working at the school to set up for the fair. Flags were hung on

fences, trees, and flown from windows. A sign that stated welcome in several languages was hung at the enterance to the fair. Saturday morning saw the committee hard at work by seven in the morning. When the "Multicultural Fair" opened at ten o'clock one saw children and parents dressed in ethnic costumes that represented a few of the nations of the school's heritage. The origami booth was a big success for many of the children wanted to learn how to make the flying cranes and other animal shapes. The international food table attracted many people and by the end of the day, the fair was considered a success. The good news came when the organizers of the fair announced that they would keep the same theme for next year and expand upon the concept started this year.

An awards assembly was held on Thursday, May 19. This ceremony was attended by grades three through six and lasted about one hour. Awards were given out in music which included participation in district and county music events. Science awards were given out based on the individual projects submitted to the science fair. Mathematics awards were based on the school's yearly participation in the Math Olympiad, a nationwide contest that challenges the students in mathematical concepts. There was a great improvement in the attention and behavior of the student body at this assembly compared to assemblies held earlier in the year.

Halls, although very busy due to the activity of the fair, were quite orderly and complaints were recorded at five

for the week. Cafeteria and playground followed the same course. There was only one incident that took place during recess. Some fifth grade boys decided to return to the classroom during recess to play on the computer. This is not allowed because the area is not supervised. Two of the boys got into an altercation which lead to physical contact. The incident went unreported until the next day when the mother of one of the boys complained about the incident and wanted to know how the boys would be reprimanded. The writer met with the two boys and found out that this kind of behavior pattern had been going on for quite some time. The boys missed recess for the rest of the week and had to write up the incident which then became part of the discipline file kept in the office.

At the end of the twelve week process the writer met with the faculty and received very positive feedback on the projects that directly addressed the issue of school climate. Most of the teachers expressed an interest in pursuing the multicultural concept and extending some of the ideas that were started this year.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The proper school climate is absolutely essential to the social and the academic success of any learning institution. Educators must offer students a quiet, calm and safe environment in which to grow. Each child's unique role and responsibility must be addressed within the school community. It is therefore imperative that a school offer an atmosphere where reflection and thoughtfulness prevail.

The problem areas in the writer's elementary school were the areas where supervision was more loosely structured: cafeteria, playground, hallways and during assemblies. New rules were implemented and the children were made accountable for their actions. Conflict Resolution through peer mediation was also employed in order for the student body to see their responsibility in maintaining the proper school climate. Muticulturalism was introduced through assemblies, showcases and projects initiated by individual teachers. The culmination of this activity came with the Multicultural Fair held on May 21, 1994. Dealing with the sixth grade parents was truly an on-going problem. The areas discussed in the first meeting became the focus for individual meetings held

in the last part of the school year. In each of these areas the writer's strategies varied greatly according to the activity being pursued.

The playground was the first area that was addressed. Rules were established to insure the students safety while on the playground. Grade level six was representative of the school population. It was estimated by the writer that the improvement rate would be 30 out of the 39 students. The improvement rate was better, 33 out of the 39 students, better than previously estimated. Most of the areas showed an improvement, but the six graders continued to go off the playground without permission. Too often they are found in the halls or other areas where they are not under direct supervision.

New cafeteria rules were also initiated. The six graders were observed in the cafeteria to determine if the rules established for this area were meaningful and sufficient. They showed an improvement rate of 32 out of 39. This was an improvement over the estimated rate of 30 out of 39. Two areas, coming in on time for lunch and leaving assigned seats, still need to be addressed. The class showed an improvement in these areas but they did not put the effort into these areas that they did in the other areas found in appendix C.

Hallways, the most difficult area at the onset of this practicum, turned out with the highest success rate. The six

grade improvement rate was 34 out of the 39 students surveyed which was well above the estimated rate of 30 out of 39. Only one of the areas, running in the halls, still needs further improvement. Each of the six grades were extremely cooperative in this area and even reminded the lower classes of the existing rules. Looking at the progress of the entire school in this area the writer can safely say that there was a great improvement in hallway demeanor.

School assemblies also received a new set of rules. Students were often out of control in assemblies and the noise level was way over the accepted volume. Once again the writer expected an improvement rate of 30 out of 39 among the six graders being surveyed. The actual improvement rate was 30 out of 39. All of the areas covered in appendix E showed an improvement. During the last assembly the sixth grade classes came up with a perfect record. They were attentive and cooperative. The entire school's behavior during assemblies has shown a marked improvement.

Conflict Resolution was introduced to the members of the sixth grade. They were instructed in peer mediation and from the survey on Conflict Resolution they feel that in some situations they are not treated fairly. Fighting on the playground was brought out as one of their big concerns. The improvement rate estimated by the writer, 26 out of 39, was lower than the actual figures of 30 out of 39. By the end of the practicum incidences that needed peer mediation or direct

involvement by those in authority dropped to less than one a day.

In recent years the writer's elementary school population has changed to include many families that cover a large and diverse ethnic mix. It is extremely important that children understand that people come from different cultural backgrounds and often have beliefs and customs that differ from what they consider the norm.

There were too many instances of name calling and ethnic slurs and the writer predicted that the improvement rate, among the sample sixth graders, would be 28 out of 39. At the end of the survey the actual improvement rate was 32 out of 39. This could be attributed to the emphasis on multiculturalism in the last weeks of this practicum. By the end of the 12 weeks the office was reporting that less than three incidences were taking place on a weekly basis.

Parents are an important part of the school community. The children depend on them to provide the basics of life but in the case of the elementary school in question the parents take away too much of the responsibility that pertains directly to their children.

The improvement rate did not reach the expectations of the writer. By the end of the practicum implementation the improvement rate was only 21 out of the 39 sets of parents, falling below the expected outcome by 4 sets of parents. This can be directly related to the fact that these parents are

not capable of letting go and will go to great lengths to shield their children from responsibility. The number of excuses that the parents submitted on part of their children only dropped from five per week to an average of four per week.

Discussion

This practicum was concerned with improving school climate by using conflict resolution in Grades K-6. It was hoped by the writer that the goals set forth would be achieved, and that changes made would have a lasting effect upon the school climate. Adjustments were made at important junctures to accommodate guidelines that did not always hold true. Toby (1992-1993) states in one of the latest issues of American Educator that teachers roles have changed a great deal since the 1960's. They no longer command the automatic respect from either student or parent that was once part of their position. Their authority is questioned at every turn and their decision are often overturned by unsupportive administrators. Today teachers, are left to their own devices, some will succeed and some will fail. Success can be accomplished if administrators, teachers, students, parents and the total school community work toward a common goal in which a common need is met. Shared decision-making is at the root of having a community work together to solve a problem. When everyone is informed, involved and pulling together the results should be positive.

The Climate Committee worked extremely hard to initiate this program. Their interest and focus was on improving school climate but the writer as well as the committee didn't feel that their hard work would accomplish such immediate improvement. The students seemed to want rules and parameters set for them and responded favorably even in areas where rewards were not given.

The community members who served on this committee were extremely gratified to see their directives taken so seriously by the student body. At the end of the school year when a student government was proposed the students bought into it 100%. The elections were held in June and these new representatives are in place to start work in September 1994. The student council is made up of grades 4 through 6. Members of grade four will be instructed in conflict resolution. The writer will take this on, and ensure that all students are similarly informed. This will enhance the opportunity for problem solving to take place on a consistent basis.

Listening became the most important skill the writer employed. Dissemination of information and ideas that were given by the other stakeholders were valuable, but needed to be sifted and sorted. Keeping notes and processing them quickly was also helpful. Open lines of communication with the committee and other faculty members was very important. When someone wanted to have input, the writer felt obligated to take their contribution seriously and see where or if it

could be assimilated into the total program.

Working closely with the parents and teachers in the area of multi-culturalism was very enlightening. Some teachers needed much more direction than others. Their understanding of multi-culturalism was limited to racial differences and did not encompass the broad multifaceted meaning of cultural diversity. Cooperation was needed here because the lines were not carefully drawn and the faculty, as well as the parents, were allowed to select areas that held their interest. Coordinating the fair was the area that gave the writer the most difficulty. At the last minute, a week before, the parent volunteers that were preparing the international foods said that they were swamped with work and didn't have time to complete the cooking tasks. With the help of another teacher the writer called other parents and established a whole new cooking group.

The students learned a great deal from this total experience. Their response and open enthusiasm to rules that would restrict their behavior only goes to prove that children want to know their parameters. The student population now functions as a more cohesive group and seems to be more supportive of one another.

The success of this practicum was entirely due to the cooperation and dedication of those involved. The continued success of this project depends upon whether the writer can keep the school community's focus on school climate.

Recommendations

Many of the projects undertaken during this practicum have proved successful but consistency must now prevail. It is one thing to introduce a change, but to make that change a lasting and meaningful part of the school climate will take vigilance and commitment. The writer knows that unless these areas are watched over and kept in check that old habits will prevail.

The one problem area that the writer sees for the future is the area of supervision during lunch and recess. The program worked out by the writer and the principal has been very effective, but due to budgetary cuts most part time supervisory personnel will not exist for the school year 1994-1995. All but one of the supervisors were cut under the current budget which will not allow this present form of supervision to continue to take place. The writer must now go back and look at alternate ways to cover supervision and still run an effective program. Since monies were cut drastically the only program left open is to ask for parent volunteers to fill in these positions. This has been the practice of some surrounding school districts, but the end product is not always satisfactory.

It is very encouraging to know that the parents are still interested in the multicultural theme and that the teachers are looking forward to more information in this same vein. Awareness in the area of multiculturalism is very

important for schools of the 90's and to be able to work with a school community that is supportive is very encouraging. It is thereby recommended by this writer to continue the pursuit of the Multicultural theme in order to educate the students in the district that other cultures exist and are worth exploring.

Dissemination

The faculty has been extremely cooperative during this whole process. They were supportive because they understood that the climate of the school would be improved. Each of them had their own agenda but in reality they wanted to see effective change take place that would be supportive of the mission statement of the school. If the writer did not have their support it would have been extremely difficult to bring this practicum to a successful conclusion. The writer feels that the practicum met its goals, because so many of the areas had a higher rate of improvement over the earlier estimated rates in the practicum proposal. The feedback from faculty, administration, and parents was also very positive. The writer feels that the continuation of the goals set forth in this practicum will become an integral part of the school climate supported by the total school community.

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APPENDIX A

CLIMATE COMMITTEE SURVEY

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE
1. Conflicts do occur outside a supervised area (cafeteria, etc.)				
2. Lack of cooperation with monitors is evident.				
3. Children question monitor's authority.				
4. Children's activities seem to be non-directed.				
5. Noncompliance with rules and policies occur.				
6. Name calling and fighting result from conflict on playground, cafeteria, etc..				
7. Cliques form as a result of conflict.				
8. Stress and anxiety are evidenced in non-structured environments.				
9. Children can often be taught to redirect their energies.				
10. Children need to be made aware of their responsibilities.				
11. Rules should be gone over with children.				
12. Results of actions should be explained-know the consequences.				

13. Teachers should be directly involved with non-classroom conflict.

14. Parents should be informed on serious indiscretions.

15. Parents should be informed on minor infractions.

16. There are clear procedures to deal with emergencies.

17. Positive behavior is acknowledged frequently, students and staff feel appreciated.

18. The principal and staff show respect, consideration and sensitivity to students and parents.

19. Children need to be taught conflict resolution.

20. Peer mediation should be considered.

21. Children should be involved in the decision making process.

22. Children need more concrete rules and directions.

23. Assemblies can be used to introduce a program of caring and concern.

24. Assemblies to discuss issues should be held regularly.

25. If children learn how to solve problems they can come to avoid problems.

APPENDIX B

PLAYGROUND CHECKLIST

Appendix B - Playground

Playground- Please check the area in question:

1. Going off grounds without permission. _____
2. Throwing objects (rocks etc.) on the playground. _____
3. Starting or participating in a fight. _____
4. Using inappropriate or abusive language. _____
5. Talking back to the playground monitors. _____
6. Other - Explain: _____
   _____

Supervisor_____

Date_____

Classroom Teacher_____

Parent's signature_____

_____

APPENDIX C

CAFETERIA CHECKLIST

Appendix C - Cafeteria

The following checklist will be provided to supervisory personnel and to the office to have inappropriate behavior recorded.

Lunch
Please check the area in question:

1. Speaking in a loud or disruptive voice. _____
2. Getting out of your seat at the incorrect time. _____
3. Throwing food or other items in the cafeteria. _____
4. Being disrespectful to the lunch monitors. _____
5. Coming in for lunch late, or leaving too early. _____
6. Not cleaning up lunch area._____
7. Other- Explain:_____
   _____

Supervisor_____

Date_____

Classroom Teacher_____

Parent's signature_____

APPENDIX D

HALLWAY CHECKLIST

Appendix D - Hallways

Halls - Please check the area in question.

1. Running in the halls. _____
2. Yelling or speaking too loud in the halls. _____
3. Jumping down stairs or sliding down bannisters in the hall. _____
4. Pushing or shoving another student in the halls. _____
5. Talking back when stopped for a hall infraction. _____
6. Other - Explain: _____
   _____

Supervisor_____

Date_____

Classroom Teacher_____

Parent's Signature_____

APPENDIX E

ASSEMBLY PROGRAM CHECKLIST

Appendix E - Assembly Programs

Auditorium - Please check the area in question:

1. Yelling or cat-calling at performances. _____
2. Changing assigned seat. _____
3. Being disruptive during assembly. _____
4. Touching or punching during an assembly. _____
5. Leaving assembly without permission. _____
6. Other - Explain: _____
   _____

Supervisor_____

Date_____

Classroom Teacher_____

Parent's Signature_____

APPENDIX F

SURVEY FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

APPENDIX F
Survey for Conflict Resolution

On a scale from 1-5 please rank the following statements

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Not Sure
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

1. Supervisors and staff are always available.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The principal asks students about their ideas at this school .	1	2	3	4	5
3. The school community makes the students about their ideas at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When rules are broken all students receive the same treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Students can trust one another	1	2	3	4	5
6. Students at this school can trust and have confidence in a teacher's decision.	1	2	3	4	5
7. All ethnic groups are respected at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
8. School rules are posted and visible.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The new rules are fair at this school.	1	2	3	4	5

10. Most students are involved in school activities, both during and after school hours.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Students should speak to someone in authority if they witness someone defacing or destroying school property.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Students should speak to someone in authority if they see a fellow student stealing.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Students should speak to someone in authority if they know someone is being treated unfairly by another student.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Students should speak to someone in authority if they think they are being treated unfairly.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Students are treated fairly at this school.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX G

MULTI-CULTURAL LIST

APPENDIX G - MULTICULTURAL LIST

NAME_____ DATE_____

All the members of your family that came before you are your ANCESTORS.
Ask someone in your family to help you fill in the names on your FAMILY TREE below.
When you have filled in the names (with females use birth last names),
write the place of birth of that person.

YOU

_____
_____

PARENTS MOTHER FATHER

_____ _____
_____ _____

GRAND PARENTS

MOTHER	FATHER	MOTHER	FATHER
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

MOTHER	FATHER	MOTHER	FATHER
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

GREAT GRAND PARENTS

MOTHER	FATHER	MOTHER	FATHER
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Family Name:_____

Great Great Great Grandparents:

Names (if possible)_____

_____

_____

Countries of Origin_____

_____

_____

_____

Great Great Great Great

Grandparents:

Names (if Possible)_____

_____

_____

Countries of Origin_____

_____

_____

_____

Anything else you would like to add:

APPENDIX H

MULTI-CULTURAL WEEK

Appendix H

Multi-cultural week

Please answer the following question to the best of your ability.

1. The United States is called the "Melting Pot". Why?
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. The culture of the United States is a blend of many cultures. Why is this good?
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. What did you learn of the customs or culture of the following ethnic groups.

   A. Korean_____
   _____

   B. Pakistanian_____
   _____

   C. Russian_____
   _____

   D. Indian _____
   _____

   E. Filipino _____
   _____

4. What language did you try to imitate? _____

5. Do you think English would be a difficult language to pronounce and learn?_____
   _____
   _____

6. Changing one's country and place of origin is very difficult. Why?_____
   _____

7. What do you feel was the most important item you acquired from our multi-cultural sharing? _____

APPENDIX I

PARENT'S SEMINAR

Appendix I - Parents Seminar

Please answer the following questions after attending the parent's seminar.

1. After parent training session do you feel more comfortable dealing with your adolescent son or daughter. _____
   _____
   _____

2. Do you feel you are now more awareof the problems that face today's youth. _____
   _____
   _____

3. Would you like to continue working in small groups as the need arises. _____
   _____

4. What method from the following seems to work best for you.
   a. A direct and immediate approach._____
   b. A time out period while tempers cool._____
   c. A family discussion._____

5. Would you like to be on a mailing list to be informed of new literature when it is available._____
   _____

APPENDIX J

VIDEO LISTING FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Appendix J

Video Listings for School Improvement

1. California Attorney General's Office (Producer), & Morita, P. (Host). (1991). Safe Schools: A Guide for Action [Film]. Sacramento, CA:School Law Enforcement Partnership.

2. California Attorney General's Office (Producer), & Bosley, T. (Host). (1984). Chaos to Calm: Creating Safe Schools [Film]. Sacramento, CA: School Law Enforcement Partnership.

3. Sprick, R. (Presenter). (1990). Playground Discipline: Part I and Part II [Film]. Eugene, OR: Teaching Strategies, Incorporated.

APPENDIX K

MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION

Appendix K

Multi-Cultural Education

I. Take a survey of ethnic groups represented in the school.
   - A. Teacher generated survey
   - B. Each class is responsible for its own list.
   - C. Pool list and take the areas not generally studied in an elementary curriculum, i.e. China.

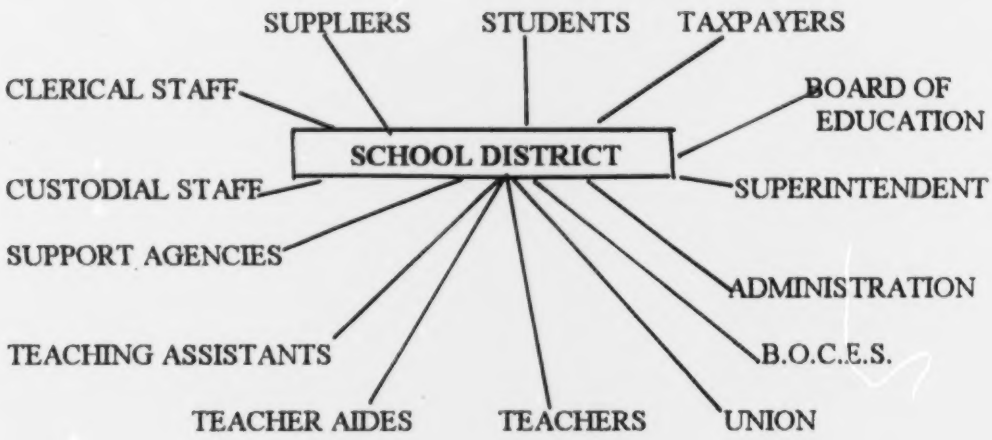
II. Assign class to an ethnic group.
   - A. Research customs
     1. Special holidays
     2. Coming of age ceremony
     3. Sports
     4. Birthday celebration
   - B. Research Culture
     1. Music
     2. Food
     3. Dress
     4. Language
     5. Dance
   - C. Write to embassies to ask for information on customs and culture of the country
   - D. Contact Travel agencies for brochures of assigned country.

III. Present a school fair where all ethnic groups are represented.
   - A. Language samples
   - B. Pictures of country
     1. Consult National Geographic
     2. Use World map for location
   - C. Food and clothing that is representative of nation.
   - D. Each group has a short presentation to total assembly.
   - E. Guest speakers.

APPENDIX L

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

APPENDIX L


SUPPLIERS
STUDENTS
TAXPAYERS
CLERICAL STAFF
BOARD OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL DISTRICT
CUSTODIAL STAFF
SUPERINTENDENT
SUPPORT AGENCIES
ADMINISTRATION
TEACHING ASSISTANTS
B.O.C.E.S.
TEACHER AIDES
TEACHERS
UNION

APPENDIX M

MULTICULTURAL LETTER

APPENDIX M

Multicultural Letter

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your support of West Side School multi-cultural beginning projects. Your response to our call for a family "tree" was extremely rewarding. We will be posting the statistics at the West Side School Fair which has Multi-Culturalism as its theme.

The Lip-sync benefit performance was a large success. Your generosity has allowed us to send $800.00 of clothing, food, and medical supplies to Croatia, via the Matura family. We will also be sending a check and some needed supplies to the Bosnian refugee camp.

During the school year we have featured Norway and Croatia in our main hall showcase. The students have been involved in related programs and activities. Look for a change in the display in the near future. If you have some artifacts or memorabilia from any part of the former U.S.S.R., Korea, or the Philippines we would like to feature your treasures in one of the new displays.

Thanks for all your support,

Bernadette L. McNulty & Susan L. Waldron

APPENDIX N

FAIR VOLUNTEERS

APPENDIX N

Fair Volunteers

Dear Parents,

The West Side School fair is quickly approaching. Part of the fair will have entertainment that will exhibit different customs from our multi-ethnic population. The committee would like to concentrate on dances and songs that represent these many regions of the world.

We need parents to teach ethnic dances and\or songs to small groups of children.

We also need the following:

1. sheet music
2. cassette tapes
3. records

If you can help us in this endeavor please send the slip below back to your child's teacher.

_____ I will be able to help with _____dance from _____(country). I would prefer to work with a group of _____ (number of children)_____ (time).

SIGNED _____

I will be able to help with _____song from _____(country). I would prefer to work with a group of _____(number of children) _____(time). Signed_____